

REMARKS

I. Summary of Office Action

Claims 1-30 were pending in this case. Claims 1-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious from Reiter et al. U.S. Patent No. 4,751,578 ("Reiter") in view of Young U.S. Patent No. 4,706,121 ("Young").

II. The § 103 Rejections of Claims 1-30

Claims 1-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious from Reiter in view of Young. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants hereby make of record in this application the 37 C.F.R. § 1.132 Declaration submitted together with applicants' May 20, 1997 Reply to Office Action in Bennington et al. U.S. Patent Application No. 08/119,367 (now U.S. Patent No. 6,418,556), from which this application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 120. MPEP § 201.06(a). Copies of the 1.132 Declaration and the May 20, 1997 Reply to Office Action are enclosed. In the March 31, 1998 Office Action issued in the parent application, the Examiner concluded that the 1.132 Declaration was proper to overcome various rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in the parent application. For the Examiner's

convenience, applicants have enclosed a copy of the March 31, 1998 Office Action.

Applicants respectfully submit that the enclosed 1.132 Declaration demonstrates the nonobviousness of claims 1-30 of the present application. In particular, the 1.132 Declaration contains objective evidence of the copying, long-felt need, and commercial success of applicants' claimed approach. It is well-settled that such objective evidence must be considered by the Examiner in determining the issue of obviousness of the claimed invention. *Stratoflex, Inc. v. Aeroquip Corp.*, 218 USPQ 871, 879 (Fed. Cir. 1983); see also MPEP § 716.

Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of claims 1-30 based on *Reiter* in view of *Young* be withdrawn.

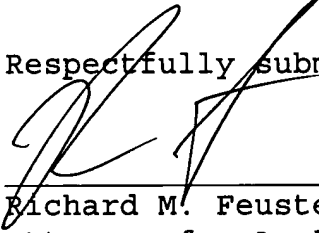
III. Contingent Request for Telephonic Interview

If for any reason the Examiner is unable to allow claims 1-30 of the present application based on this Reply, applicants respectfully request a telephonic interview with the Examiner before the issuance of a final Office Action.

IV. Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that this application, including claims 1-30, is in condition for allowance. Prompt consideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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